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**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

1           A plastic hollow preform is drawn through a mold  
2 passage formed in a closed mold by applying a generally constant  
3 suction to a downstream end of a conduit having an upstream end  
4 connected to an output end of the mold passage. A flow cross  
5 section of the conduit is varied between its upstream and down-  
6 stream ends so as to vary a rate at which the preform is drawn  
7 through the passage by the suction. The flow cross section is  
8 varied by displacing a valve element in the conduit between  
9 positions in which it differently blocks flow through the con-  
10 duit.